

DEVIL'S SWAMP LAKE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LOUISIANA



EPA REGION 6

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 06

Contact:

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EPA ID#: LAD981155872

Site ID#: 0600652

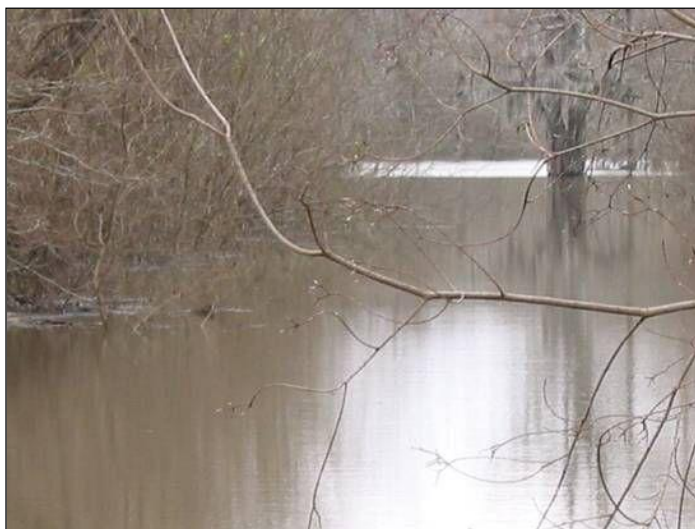
Updated: December 2012

Background

Devil's Swamp is located near Scotlandville, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, about ten miles north of the City of Baton Rouge. Devil's Swamp is a wetland, flood plain and lake covering approximately 12 square miles of land along the Mississippi River. The swamp to the north of the lake is characterized by numerous small open ponds and water tupelo trees. Industrial facilities have discharged to the swamp since the 1960's and the 1970's.

Sampling conducted by the State and the EPA show concentrations of PCBs congeners as the contaminant of concern. Congeners are well-defined chemical compounds in the PCB category.

Major residential areas include Scotlandville, and residential communities along Highway 61, Scenic Highway, east of Devil's Swamp. Approximately 1598 people live within two miles.



The site was proposed to the NPL list in the Federal Register on March 8, 2004. The EPA completed evaluation and negotiations with some Potential Responsible Parties (PRPs) and issued an Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) to PRPs to conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) on December 3, 2009.

There is no Record of Decision (ROD) signed yet.

Current Status

The site was proposed to the NPL list in the *Federal Register* on March 8, 2004. The EPA established a public comment period and will make a final listing decision after considering the relevant comments if the site continues to meet the requirements for listing.

In the meantime, the EPA completed evaluation and negotiations with some Potential Responsible Parties

(PRPs) as part of the enforcement process. After failure to reach a timely agreement, the EPA issued an Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) to PRPs Clean Harbors, Inc. and Baton Rouge Disposal to conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) on December 3, 2009.

Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc., representing the respondents, submitted a notice with their intent to comply with the UAO on January 4, 2010. A scoping meeting was conducted on April 8, 2010 with representatives from several state and Federal agencies to further plan the remedial investigation.

In November 2009, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals completed a Health Consultation on the Alsen Community water supply and determined the water posed no concerns for peoples' health. On May 5, 2010, representatives of the EPA and their contractor Weston collected tap water samples in the community to further evaluate citizens' concerns related to their drinking water supply.



In May 2010 a copy of the Final Preliminary Site Characterization Report was placed in the local repository at the Scotlandville Branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. This document provides a summary of previous investigations in the Devil's Swamp Lake area.

In July 2010 EPA awarded a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) for a local citizens' group, the Alsen/St. Irma Lee Community Enterprise, Inc., to hire a technical advisor to interpret site studies and/or site related health information for area residents. If you need further information, please contact the EPA TAG Coordinator listed on this site summary or Rev. Betty Jean Claiborne at the Alsen/St. Irma Lee Community Enterprise, Inc.

Phase one or Tier 1 Investigation.

The EPA staff, EPA's oversight contractor EA Engineering Science and Technology, Inc., and representatives of other Federal and State agencies reviewed the work plan for the first phase of the RI/FS investigation. This is also known as the Tier 1 investigation.

EPA held a meeting with the community on December 16, 2010. See December 2010 fact sheet for more details. Field activities were conducted in January 2011. Samples were analyzed by the laboratories and the agencies reviewed the preliminary findings in 2011. EPA also held a meeting with the TAG members on September 27, 2011 to discuss these preliminary results.

EPA met with the PRPs, the EPA's oversight contractor and representatives of other Federal and State agencies on November 9, 2011. The meeting was to discuss the preliminary results, future plans and state concerns for other *Chemicals (or constituents) of potential concern (COPCs)* that need to be investigated during the baseline risk assessment. As a result of these meetings, the first phase of the investigation was completed and the results are presented in the Final "Tier 1 Remedial Investigation (RI) Report" of February 10, 2012. At this same time, the Final "Baseline Problem Formulation Report for the Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment" was completed on February 10, 2012. One hard copy and one electronic copy on CD (pdf format) are available in the Scotlandville Branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. Copies were also provided to the Technical Advisor Group (TAG).

Phase two or Tier 2 Investigation

PRPs have prepared a draft work plan for the second phase of the investigation, also known as Tier 2. This work plan includes a proposed scope of work for collection of biological tissue samples that will help

the State address the status of the fish consumption advisory and will include collection of additional samples from South Bayou Baton Rouge. The draft document was reviewed by Federal and state agencies, comments were provided and the PRPs responded to comments. The final Tier 2 work was completed on June 25 2012. Field activities were started and completed in July 2012.

Benefits

The identification of the site for the NPL is intended to guide the EPA in:

- determining which sites warrant further investigation to assess the nature and extent of the human health and environmental risks associated with a site.

National Priorities Listing (NPL) History

Proposed Date: March 8, 2004

Final Date: Pending

Location:

- Devil's Swamp consists of a large flood plain area near Scotlandville, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, about ten miles north of the City of Baton Rouge.
- Devil's Swamp is also a freshwater wetland covering approximately 31 square kilometers (12 square miles) of land along the Mississippi River.
- Within the swamp, the "Oxbow" or "U" shaped Devil's Swamp Lake is approximately 0.75 miles (4,200 feet) in length, 1/12 miles (400 feet) wide, some 20 feet deep at its deepest parts, and covers approximately 64 acres.
- Devil's Swamp Lake is characterized as a man-made lake, resulting from the construction of Baton Rouge harbor in 1973.

Population:

- Approximately 1598 people within two miles.
- City of Baton Rouge (population 602,894 in 2002)(Metro statistical area).
- Parish of East Baton Rouge (population 412,952 in 2000)(U.S. Census Bureau).
- Major residential areas include Scotlandville, and residential communities along Highway 61, Scenic Highway, east of Devil's Swamp. This includes the Alsen Community.

Setting:

- Industrial facilities have discharged to the swamp since the 1960's and the 1970's.
- The swamp to the north of the lake is characterized by numerous small open ponds and water tupelo trees. This 262-acre area extends approximately 1.0 miles (5,500 feet) to the Devil's Swamp Lake.
- The swamp to the south of the lake is characterized also by numerous small open ponds and water tupelo trees. This 684-acre area extends approximately 2.2 miles (11,500 feet) to the Mississippi River and is subject to frequent backwater encroachment from the river.

Photos: [2005](#)

[Devil's Swamp Lake 2010](#)

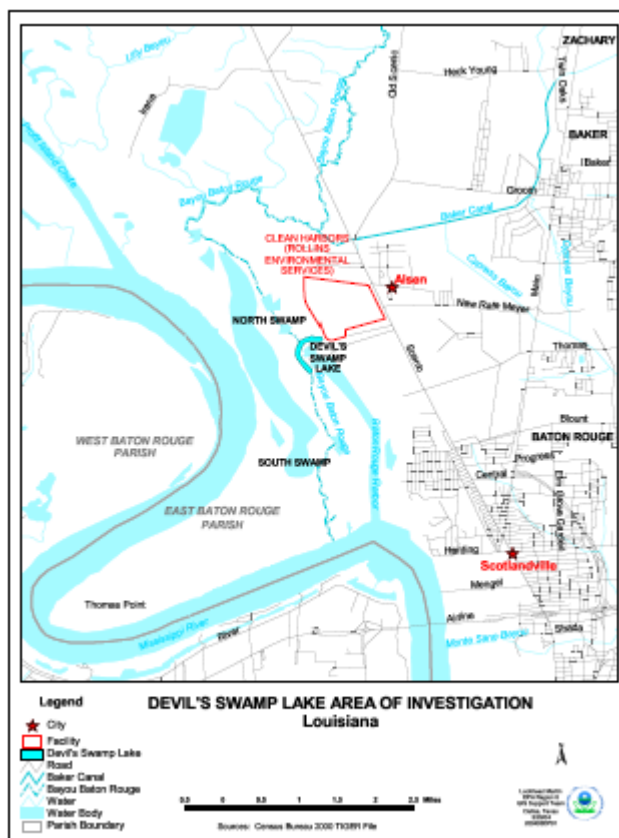
Principal Pollutants:

- Sampling conducted by the State in 1980's identified the presence of Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the lake and in a drainage ditch or outfall canal leading to the former Rollins facility. PCBs are a category or family of chemical compounds.
- Concentrations of PCBs have been observed in several samples collected by the EPA during a 1993 Expanded Site Inspection. Some samples show concentrations of PCB congeners of up to 5.2 mg/kg of Aroclor-1248, 6.4 mg/kg of Aroclor-1254 and 1.6 mg/kg of Aroclor-1260. Congeners

are well-defined chemical compounds in the PCB category.

- The extent of contamination and volume of contamination have not been established

Site Map



Human Health Considerations

- Several Preliminary Assessments and Site Inspections were completed by the EPA. More recently, in 1995, the EPA completed a Screening Level Risk Assessment (SLRA). This screening report indicated a potential for adverse risk.
- Based on the limited information available in 1995, it appears that contaminants could be posing adverse effects to biota utilizing the site, thus, the EPA initiated a comprehensive risk assessment to further collect more information, evaluate the site and the potential risk.
- In 1997, the EPA conducted sampling activities during high and low flow conditions. Data collected was analyzed and validated in 1998.
- A Human Health Risk Assessment and an Ecological Risk Assessment were completed in early 1999 by the EPA.
- The Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments have shown that concentrations of PCBs can produce unacceptable risks to human health and the environment.

Record of Decision (ROD)

- Signed: No record of decision yet.

Site Contacts

EPA Remedial Project Manager	Bartolome J. Cañellas	214.665.6662
EPA Enforcement Officer	Nixon Lance	214.665.2203
EPA Site Attorney:	John Emerson	214.665.3137
EPA Press Officer:	Dave Bary	214.665.2208
EPA Regional Public Liaison:	Donn R. Walters	214.665.6483
EPA Community I. Coordinator	Bill Little	214.665.8131
EPA TAG Coordinator:	Janetta Coats	214.665-7308
EPA Toll Free Number		1-800-533-3508
LDEQ Louisiana State Contact:	Keith Horn	225.219.3222 or 800.763.5424
LDHH Louisiana Health Dept	Darcie Olexia	504.219.4586
TAG Group - Alsen/St. Irma Lee Community Enterprise, Inc.	Rev. Betty Jean Claiborne	225.775.6600
Site Repository	Scotlandville Branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library	